Claim 1 recites an evaluation method for polycrystalline silicon which is used as a material for pulling single crystal silicon, the method including immersing a predetermined amount of polycrystalline silicon in a predetermined amount of an agent contained in a vessel, which agent is capable of dissolving polycrystalline silicon, and placing a measuring device in the agent having the polycrystalline silicon dissolved therein to count the number of foreign particles dispersed in the agent.

Nakagawa et al. disclose a method of growing a silicon crystal itself in a liquid phase. See, for example, column 1, lines 7-8. Nakagawa et al. do not disclose or suggest an evaluation method of a polycrystalline silicon that is used as a material for pulling single crystal silicon, as recited in claim 1.

Nakagawa et al. disclose dissolving polycrystalline silicon in liquid indium until it is saturated so as to prepare a melt. The melt is cooled until it is supersaturated. See column 4, lines 45-49. When the melt cools to 980°C, a substrate of non-doped polycrystalline silicon is brought into contact with the melt so as to epitaxially grow a silicon crystal having a thickness of 10 μm on the substrate. See column 4, lines 49-53. Accordingly, Nakagawa et al. are totally silent on immersing a predetermined amount of polycrystalline silicon n a predetermined amount of agent, and also do not disclose or suggest an evaluation method for the polycrystalline silicon that is used as a material as recited in claim 1.

Claim 1 also recites placing a measuring device in the agent having polycrystalline silicon dissolved therein to count the number of foreign particles dispersed in the agent. The Office Action, on page 4, lines 9-11, alleges that Nakagawa et al. disclose this feature. It is respectfully submitted that Nakagawa et al. do not disclose or suggest this feature.

Nakagawa et al. disclose a probe placed in the silicon crystal epitaxially grown on the substrate to measure the specific resistance of the silicon crystal. The probe is neither placed in an agent having polycrystalline silicon dispersed therein nor placed to count the number of foreign particles dispersed in the agent.

Claims 2-20 recite additional features of the invention and are allowable for the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1 and for the additional features recited therein. In addition, Padovani et al. and JP '230 fail to cure the deficiencies of Nakagawa et al. discussed above, and even assuming it would have been obvious to combine the references, such a combination would not have resulted in the claimed invention.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims are allowable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

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Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed.

Respectfully submitted,
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